

*The
Washington State
Child Support
Enforcement
Program Resource
Guide*



**What happens
to my
child support
now that
I am
unemployed?**

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT
OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

Division of Child Support

**If you are
out of work
and you
receive or have
child support
to pay, this
information
packet is
for you.**

***You will find
information
about:***

- Making a smaller payment on a child support debt
- Changing the amount of your monthly child support payment
- Legal resources in the state

What happens to the child support I receive or pay, now that I am unemployed?

The monthly child support obligation will continue pursuant to the specific language in your court or administrative order until the order is modified. Also, any child support debt that is owed is not affected by the lay off. This brochure contains information on the various options available to modify your order as well as referrals to legal, employment, and social services. Much of the information contained in this brochure applies to both custodial and non-custodial parents.

Will DCS collect from my unemployment compensation?

Yes, if you are required to pay through the Washington State Support Registry (WSSR) and the Division of Child Support (DCS) has the legal responsibility to take withholding action. DCS collects directly from the Employment Security Department.

The law permits DCS to withhold up to 50 percent of your benefits. Your support order sets the amount of current support we must collect. The amount of your monthly payment on past due support can, in many cases, be negotiated with your Support Enforcement Officer (SEO) without going to court.

If 50 percent of your benefit is not enough to pay current support, you may make voluntary payments directly to WSSR. Any part of your monthly obligation not paid will be added to the past due amount you owe. You may also pursue modification of your order.

How do I modify my child support order?

If child support is court ordered, both the custodial and non-custodial parent have three options available to modify the order:

- Hire an attorney,
- Petition the court on your own, or
- Request the Division of Child Support review your order for possible modification.

Parents petitioning the court on their own or hiring an attorney can petition the court at any time to modify their child support order, at their own expense. Many county courthouses have a Family Law Court Facilitator program. Court facilitators will help parents understand court procedures and obtain the forms needed to modify a court order. Court Facilitators do not give legal advice or provide legal representation. A directory of Court Facilitators can be found on the Internet at www.courts.wa.gov/directory/facilitators.cfm

You may also make a motion for a temporary order or adjustment to reduce your support obligation in circumstances such as a temporary layoff. Forms to petition to modify, adjust or request a temporary order are available at <http://www.courts.wa.gov/forms/>

The advantages of pursuing modification of your court order on your own or using an attorney may include:

1. A court may address the issue sooner than if DCS conducts a review.
2. A judge will hear the case whereas DCS only sends a case to the Prosecutor to pursue modification if the case meets certain criteria.
3. There may be less paperwork if the party petitions directly.

If you do not want to pursue modification on your own, you may contact the child support office managing your case and request a review for modification. You will be asked to provide DCS with a completed review packet and verification of your income.

Upon receipt of your completed review packet, DCS will request the same information from the other party to your order (this process may take more than 30 days from the time DCS receives your information).

When DCS has received the completed review packet and income verification from both parties, a review for modification of your support order will be conducted taking the following criteria into consideration:

- DCS must have jurisdiction over the order or acquire it by registration of the order. If another state has jurisdiction over your support order, DCS may refer the case to that state for modification or you may make a request directly to that state.
- The amount of change must be at least \$100 and at least a 25% change up or down.
- It's been three years since the order was entered or last reviewed by DCS for modification, or
- There has been a significant change of circumstances since the order was last modified. Examples that may be a significant change in circumstances include:
 - a. You are now in jail.
 - b. You have become permanently disabled or now receive public assistance.
 - c. You have new children you are supporting.
 - d. You have lost your job and are unable to find employment at the same wage.

If DCS determines your order meets the criteria for modification, your case will be referred to the Prosecuting Attorney.

The Prosecutor will recalculate the proposed child support obligation and determine if the request for modification should proceed. A petition will then be filed and both parties will be served. The length of time needed to complete the court action varies depending upon the availability of prosecutor and court resources, and the specific circumstances of your case.

If the Prosecutor determines the modification is not appropriate, no further action will be taken by them or by DCS to modify the order at that time.

An advantage of requesting DCS review your court order for modification is there is no cost to the parties. Also, negotiating a modification through a complex legal system without an attorney can sometimes be challenging.

If you do not have a case with DCS (for example, you are paying or receiving support directly from the other

party), but you want DCS to review your court order, you may apply for full collection services and request a review for modification. When you apply for services, DCS will enforce the provisions of your order as well as review the order for modification.

If child support is set by a Washington State Administrative Order, either party to the order may petition to modify the support order without asking DCS for a review.

If your circumstances have changed since DCS entered an administrative order, you may request an administrative hearing by completing a Petition for Modification or a Late Request for Administrative Hearing and mailing it to the field office managing your case. A Petition for Modification request must be made in writing while a Late Request for Administrative Hearing may be made orally. Call your Support Enforcement Officer to discuss which option better applies to your specific circumstances.

What should I do if there is a change in my Unemployment Benefits, or I return to work?

Call your Support Enforcement Office as soon as you know your income is changing. You will want to negotiate a payment amount with your SEO that meets your current obligation and considers your past due child support, medical coverage, and other bills. If you do not contact your SEO, DCS may issue a payroll deduction notice for up to 50 percent of your net income.

What if I owe a large support debt to the State of Washington, or if I do not agree with an action taken by DCS?

A Conference Board is a forum for the informal resolution of certain issues and may provide relief from a high support debt owed to the State of Washington or help resolve complaints and problems over agency actions. To find out more about Conference Boards, contact your SEO or visit the DCS website at www.wa.gov/dshs/dcs/confboard_index.shtml.

STATE OF WASHINGTON RESOURCES

Access Washington

Comprehensive Site of State
Government Information and
Services: www.access.wa.gov

Division of Child Support (DCS)

Headquarters
712 Pear St. SE
P.O. Box 9162
Olympia, WA 98507-9162
(800) 457-6202
(360) 664-5000
www.wa.gov/dshs/dcs/

Employment Security Department/Work Source

212 Maple Park
P.O. Box 9046
Olympia, WA 98507-9046
(206) 766-6000
(Seattle calling area)
(253) 396-3500
(Tacoma calling area)
(800) 362-4636
(Everywhere else in
Washington)
www.wa.gov/esd
www.wa.gov/esd/1stop

Department of Social and Health Services

Constituent Services
1115 Washington St. SE
P.O. Box 45130
Olympia, WA 98504
(800) 737-0617
www.dshs.wa.gov

Community Services Division

Headquarters
P.O. Box 45440
Olympia, WA 98504-5440
(360) 413-3370
<http://www.access.wa.gov/>
[https://www2.wa.gov/dshs/](https://www2.wa.gov/dshs/onlinecso)
[onlinecso](https://www2.wa.gov/dshs/onlinecso)

The Administrative Office of the Courts

1206 Quince St SE
P.O. Box 41170
Olympia, WA 98504-1170
(360) 753-3365
www.courts.wa.gov

Court Facilitators

[www.courts.wa.gov/directory/](http://www.courts.wa.gov/directory/facilitators.cfm)
[facilitators.cfm](http://www.courts.wa.gov/directory/facilitators.cfm)

DIVISION OF CHILD SUPPORT FIELD OFFICES

Everett (Counties served: *Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish and Whatcom*)

Everett Field Office
5415 Evergreen Way
PO Box 4282
Everett, WA 98203-9282
Office Hours: 8:00a.m. - 5:00p.m., Monday - Friday
Telephone: (425) 438-4800 or (800) 729-7580
Fax: (425) 438-4879
TDD: (425)438-4939 or 1-800-241-9489
E-mail: everett-dcs@dshs.wa.gov

Fife (Counties served: *Pierce, King, Kitsap*)

Fife Field Office
PO Box 2950
Tacoma, WA 98401-2950
Office Hours: 8:00a.m. - 5:00p.m., Monday - Friday
Telephone: (253) 922-0454 or (866) 243-4449
Fax: (253) 926-0284
TTY: (866) 270-0832
E-mail: imail_fif@dshsmg1.dshs.wa.gov

Kennewick (Counties served: *Benton, Columbia, Franklin, and Walla Walla*)

Kennewick Field Office
500 N. Morain, #2210
PO Box 5550
Kennewick, WA 99336-0550
Office Hours: 8:00a.m. - 5:00p.m., Monday - Friday
Telephone: (509) 374-2000 or (800) 345-9981
Fax: (509) 734-7251
TDD: (509) 734-7267
E-mail: kennewick-dcs@dshs.wa.gov

Olympia (Counties served: *Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Mason and Thurston*)

Olympia Field Office
6135 Martin Way
PO Box 9209
Olympia, WA 98507-9209
Office Hours: 8:00a.m. - 5:00p.m., Monday - Friday
Telephone: (360) 664-6900 or (800) 345-9964
TDD: (360) 438-8906
Fax: (360) 438-8520
E-mail: olympia-dcs@dshs.wa.gov

Seattle (Counties served: *King*)

Seattle Field Office

500 First Avenue South

Seattle, WA 98104-2830

Office Hours: 8:00a.m. - 5:00p.m., Monday - Friday

Telephone: (206) 341-7000 or (800) 526-8658

Fax: (206) 464-7449

TDD: (206) 464-7851

E-mail: seattle-dcs@dshs.wa.gov

Spokane (Counties served: *Asotin, Ferry, Garfield, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens and Whitman*)

Spokane Field Office

W. 1608 Boone

PO Box 2560

Spokane, WA 99220-2560

Office Hours: 8:00a.m. - 5:00p.m., Monday - Friday

Telephone: (509) 363-5000 or (800) 345-9982

Fax: (509) 456-4148

TDD: (509) 363-5080

E-mail: spokane-dcs@dshs.wa.gov

Tacoma (Counties served: *Kitsap and Pierce*)

Tacoma Field Office

2121 S. State Street

PO Box 1237

Tacoma, WA 98401-1237

Office Hours: 8:00a.m. - 5:00p.m., Monday - Friday

Telephone: (253) 597-3700 or (800) 345-9976

Fax: (253) 597-3725

TDD: (253) 593-9976

E-mail: tacoma-dcs@dshs.wa.gov

Vancouver (Counties served: *Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Lewis, Pacific, Skamania and Wahkiakum*)

Vancouver Field Office

5411 E. Mill Plain Blvd., Building 3

PO Box 4269

Vancouver, WA 98662-0269

Office Hours: 8:00a.m. - 5:00p.m., Monday - Friday

Telephone: (360) 696-6100 or (800) 345-9984

Fax: (360) 696-6491

TDD: (360) 690-4633

E-mail: vancouver-dcs@dshs.wa.gov

Wenatchee (Counties served: *Adams, Chelan, Douglas, Grant and Okanogan*)

Wenatchee Field Office

Street address:

515 Grant Road,

East Wenatchee, WA 98802

Mailing address:

PO Box 2929

Wenatchee, WA 98807-2929

Office Hours: 8:00a.m. - 5:00p.m., Monday - Friday

Telephone: (509) 886-6800 or (800) 535-1113

Fax: (509) 886-6212

TDD: (509) 886-6833

E-mail: wenatchee-dcs@dshs.wa.gov

Yakima (Counties served: *Kittitas and Yakima*)

Yakima Field Office

1002 North 16th Avenue

PO Box 22510

Yakima, WA 98907

Office Hours: 8:00a.m. - 5:00p.m., Monday - Friday

Telephone: (509) 249-6000 or (800) 441-0859

Fax: (509) 576-3776

TDD: (509) 575-2675

E-mail: yakima-dcs@dshs.wa.gov

LEGAL RESOURCES

Northwest Justice Project (206) 464-1519 •

www.nwjustice.org

Services available: Provides civil (non-criminal) legal assistance to low income residents of Washington. Call the Coordinated Legal Education, Advice and Referral (CLEAR) toll-free telephone service at 1-888-201-1014 to find out if you qualify for free assistance. TDD Phone 1-888-201-9737.

Washington State Bar Association 1-800-945-9722 •

www.wsba.org

Services available: Maintains the authoritative directory of all attorneys licensed to practice in Washington state and offers a list of local county bar referral services. Information pamphlets on a variety of legal topics are available free of charge on the website.

WHERE TO GET FORMS FOR FAMILY LAW ACTIONS

Office of the Administrator for the Courts (OAC)

Court rules, instructions, and statewide family law forms of all types – including the Washington State Child Support Schedule with Worksheets (WSCSS) – are available free of charge on the OAC Internet website at www.courts.wa.gov/forms. You may also get a free paper copy of the WSCSS by phoning the OAC Forms voice mail line at (360) 705-5328 or by writing: Office of the Administrator for the Courts, 1206 S. Quince, P.O. Box 41170, Olympia WA 98504. Other paper forms available include a child support modification kit with instructions (\$7.00); response forms for divorce, paternity, and other family law matters (free); or a full set of family law forms (\$48.00). A full set of family law forms on computer diskette costs \$20.00. Contact OAC for details.

WASHINGTON STATE COURTS FACILITATORS

Courthouse facilitators provide information to people without attorneys in uncontested family law cases about court procedures and the use of mandatory forms. Some courthouse facilitators are available on a drop-in, first come first serve basis. Other courthouse facilitators are available only by appointment. Please call for office hours and appointment information or visit the Washington Courts website at www.courts.wa.gov/directory/facilitators.cfm

Benton County

Benton County Courthouse Facilitator

7320 W. Quinalt Ave.

Kennewick, WA 99336

(509) 736-3071

Chelan County

Chelan County Pro Se Self-Help Center

350 Orondo St.

Wenatchee, WA 98801

(509) 664-5380

Clallam County

Family Court Facilitator for Clallam County

223 E. 4th St., Rm. 213

Port Angeles, WA 98362

(360) 417-2588

Clark County

Clark County Court Facilitator

1200 Franklin St.

Vancouver, WA 98686

(360) 397-2292

Douglas County

Douglas County Court Facilitator

620 Lewis St.

Wenatchee, WA 98801

(509) 662-6156

Ferry County

Ferry County Family Law Facilitator

c/o Rural Resources

N320 Main

Colville, WA 99114

(509) 684-8421

Franklin County

Franklin County Courthouse Facilitator

1016 N. 4th Ave.

Pasco, WA 99301

(509) 545-3525

Grant County

Grant County Family Law Facilitator

Grant County Clerk's Office

35 C St. NW

Ephrata, WA 98823

(509) 754-2011; ask for Clerk's Office

Grays Harbor County

Grays Harbor County Family Law Facilitator

102 W. Broadway, Rm. 203

Montesano, WA 98563

(360) 249-3842

Island County

Island County Court Facilitator

101 N.E. 6th St.

Coupeville, WA 98239

(360) 240-5515

Facilitator Sarah McMahan

Email: sarahm@co.island.wa.us

Jefferson County

Jefferson County Family Law Facilitator

1820 Jefferson

Port Townsend, WA 98368

(360) 385-9125

King County

King County Family Law Facilitators

■ ***Seattle Facilitators***

King County Superior Court

516 Third Ave., Room W-280

Seattle, WA 98104-2312

(206) 296-9092

■ ***Kent Facilitators***

Regional Justice Center

401 Fourth Ave. North, Room 3D

Kent, WA 98032

(206) 205-2526

Kitsap County

Kitsap County Courthouse Facilitator

614 Division St., Rm. 216

Port Orchard, WA 98366

(360) 337-7260

Klickitat County

Klickitat County Family Law Facilitator

Klickitat County Courthouse

205 S. Columbus

Goldendale, WA 98620

(509) 773-2388

Lewis County

Lewis County Court Facilitator

462 NW Park St.

Chehalis, WA 98532

(360) 748-0430

Mason County

Mason County Family Law Facilitator

Mason County Courthouse

419 N. 4th St., 2nd Floor

Shelton, WA 98584

(360) 427-7775

Okanogan County

Okanogan County Family Law Facilitator

149 3rd N.

Okanogan, WA 98840

(509) 422-7132

Pierce County

Pierce County Family Law Facilitator

930 Tacoma Ave., Rm. 119

Tacoma, WA 98402

(253) 798-3382

San Juan County

San Juan County Family Law Night

350 Court St., Second Floor

Friday Harbor, WA 98250

(360) 378-2163

Skagit County

Skagit County Courthouse Facilitator

Skagit County Courthouse, Rm. 202

205 W. Kincaid St.

Mt. Vernon, WA 98273

(360) 336-9469

Skamania County

Skamania County Courthouse Facilitator

240 Vancouver Ave.

Stevenson, WA 98648

(509) 427-9443

Snohomish County

Family Law Facilitation Program

3000 Rockefeller Ave., MS-605

Everett, WA 98201

(425) 388-3795

Spokane County

Spokane County Court Facilitator

W1116 Broadway

Family Law Center, Rm. 101

Spokane, WA 99260

(509) 477-7612

Email jgriffith@spokanecounty.org

Stevens County

Stevens County Family Law Facilitator

c/o Rural Resources

215 S. Oak St.

Colville, WA 99114

(509) 684-8421

Thurston County

Thurston County Family Court Facilitator

2801 32nd Ave. SW

Tumwater, WA 98512

(360) 709-3274

Walla Walla County

Walla Walla County Court Facilitator

421 S. 4th

Walla Walla, WA 99362

(509) 525-1872

Whatcom County

Whatcom County Family Law Facilitator

311 Grand Ave., Suite 304

Bellingham, WA 98225

(360) 676-6777, ext. 50038

Yakima County

***Court Administrator's Office for Yakima County
Superior Court***

Family Court Facilitator

104 N. 1st St.

Yakima, WA 98901

(509) 574-2695

Maintained by the Office of the Administrator for the
Courts for the Washington State Judiciary.

UNION CONTACTS

The Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO

www.wslc.org

Olympia Office

906 S. Columbia St., Suite 330

Olympia, WA 98501

(360) 943-0608

Seattle Office

314 First Avenue West

Seattle, WA 98119

1-800-542-0904

(206) 281-8901

Tacoma Office

1322 South Fawcett Ave., Room 14

Tacoma, WA 98402

(253) 475-1950

American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

1212 Jefferson St. SE, Suite 101

Olympia, WA 98501

(360) 352-2885

www.afscme.org

The Washington Federation of State Employees/AFSCME

1212 Jefferson St. SE, Suite 300

Olympia, WA 98501

1-800-562-6002

(360) 352-7603

www.wfse.org



Washington State
Department of Social
& Health Services

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